

REMARKS

This paper is filed in response to the Office Action mailed on June 27, 2007. Presently, Claims 1-17 and 19-30 are pending in the application. Of these, Claims 4-14, 21, and 22 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 24-26 and 29 are allowed. Claims 2, 3, 15, 16, and 20 are objected to. Claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, and 30 are rejected. Reconsideration of Claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, and 30 is respectfully requested.

The Rejection of Claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, and 30 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,692,765 (Laughlin).

In rejecting the claims, Laughlin is viewed as disclosing the fasteners 57 or 74 shorten the strap via the operation of the elements 32, 34. Claims 1, 17, and 19 have been amended to recite an adjustable fastener located on a strap, whereby the strap is shortened by adjusting the fastener. "Fasteners 57 and 74", if indeed they can be called that at all (referred to as "ends" by Laughlin) are not adjustable, but are merely passive and respond only by adjusting the elements 32, 34 which are not located on the strap. Claims 1, 17, and 19 recite an *adjustable fastener on a strap*, whereby *the strap is shortened by adjusting the fastener*. It stands to reason that the act of "adjusting" by the fastener is done at the strap, not remote from the strap as would be done in the case of adjusting elements 32 and 34. Therefore, Claims 1, 17, and 19 are not anticipated by Laughlin.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, and 30 is respectfully requested.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 24-26 and 29 are allowed. Claims 2, 3, 15, 16, and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter.

Withdrawn Claims

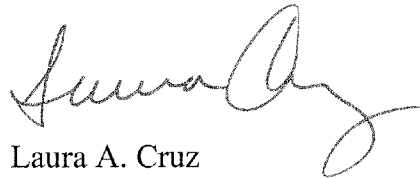
The withdrawn Claims 4-14, 21, and 22 depend from Claim 1, therefore, these claims are entitled to be rejoined in this application.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any further questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR
JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}



Laura A. Cruz
Registration No. 46,649
Direct Dial No. 206.695.1725

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